

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application. Please amend the claims as shown below without prejudice.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended): A method of facilitating provision of a point-to-point cable connection between first and second points separated by an extended span of water including a first region of shallow water and a second region of relatively deep water, the method comprising:

providing a plurality of ducts from the first point through the first region of the extended span to an offshore termination point between the first and second points, wherein the plurality of ducts are combined to form a multiple duct conduit, and wherein one of the plurality of ducts is an outer duct that encompasses at least two others of the plurality of ducts, wherein the outer duct includes a water tight seal, wherein a region of trapped air is disposed between the outer duct and the at least two others of the plurality of ducts;

placing a first communication cable in one of said plurality of ducts to provide a connection between the first point and said offshore termination point;

receiving at said offshore termination point, a second communication cable from the second point; ~~and~~

connecting said first communication cable to said second communication cable at said offshore termination point to create the point-to-point cable connection; ~~and~~

installing the plurality of ducts, wherein installing the plurality of ducts includes eliminating the trapped air such that the plurality of ducts sinks in water.

2. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, wherein said first point is onshore and said providing step comprises:

providing said plurality of ducts from the first point through the first region of the extended span to said offshore termination point between the first and second points, wherein said offshore termination point is at a distance of at least 2 kilometers from the first point.

3. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, wherein said first point is onshore and wherein said providing step comprises:

providing said plurality of ducts from the first point through the first region of the extended span to said offshore termination point between the first and second points, wherein said offshore termination point is at a distance of about 10 to 20 kilometers from the first point.

4. (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein said first point is onshore and wherein said providing step comprises:

providing said plurality of ducts from the first point through the first region of the extended span to said offshore termination point between the first and second points, wherein said offshore termination point is adjacent to a transition between the first and second regions.

5. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 4, wherein said first region is a Continental Shelf.

6. (Original): The method of claim 5, wherein said offshore termination point is positioned in water having a depth of less than about 200m.

7. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, wherein said placing step comprises placing the first communication cable in one of said plurality of ducts to provide a connection between the first point and said offshore termination point, wherein said cable is a relatively thin, lightweight cable; and

said receiving step comprises receiving at said offshore termination point, a second cable from the second point, wherein said second cable is an armored cable.

8. (Original): The method of claim 1, further comprising a step of:
burying said plurality of ducts in the seabed.

9. (Original): The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of:
burying said plurality of ducts in the seabed at a burial depth that decreases as a function of distance from said first point such that said plurality of ducts are buried deeper near said first point.

10. (Original): The method of claim 9, wherein said first point is onshore, adjacent a shoreline.

11. (Original): the method of claim 1, wherein said providing step comprises:
providing said plurality of ducts from the first point through the first region of the extended span to said offshore termination point between the first and second points, wherein said offshore termination point is an offshore platform.

12. (Original): The method of claim 11, wherein said providing step further comprises:
providing communication equipment on said offshore platform to receive and transmit signals via said first and second cables.

13. (Original): The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
providing a plurality of spaced apart cable exits in the region of the offshore termination point.

14. (Original): The method of claim 13, wherein said step of providing a plurality of spaced apart cable exits comprises:
providing said plurality of spaced apart cable exits in the region of the offshore termination point, wherein said spaced apart cable exits are preferably spaced apart by at least 50m.

15. (Original): The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of:
branching each of said plurality of ducts so that each duct leads to a corresponding cable exit.

16 – 21. (Cancelled):

22. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, the method further comprising the step of:

placing a third cable in one of the said plurality of ducts to provide another connection between the first point and said offshore termination point;

receiving at said termination point, a fourth cable extending from a third point; and
connecting said third cable and said fourth cable at said offshore termination point, wherein a point-to-point cable connection is made from the first point to the third point.

23. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the second communication cable is received at the offshore termination point as a single point-to-point cable unassociated with a plurality of ducts.

24 – 26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 24 1, wherein the plurality of ducts comprises at least two separate and distinct conduits.

28. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 27, wherein the two separate and distinct conduits are housed by a multi-bore connection plate located at an end of a length of the outer duct.

29. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 24 1, wherein the outer duct is fabricated onshore.

30. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the termination point is installed at a first depth underwater, wherein the termination point is recoverable to a second depth, and wherein the second depth is a serviceable depth.

31 – 34. (Cancelled)